LOUDOUN COUNTY VIRGINIA ROUTE 9 Safety and Operational Study West Virginia to Route 7

# Safety and Operational Study of Charles Town Pike (Route 9)
## Blue Ridge and Catoctin Election Districts

**Virtual Public Input Meeting**
**Wednesday, September 22, 2021**
**6:00 – 7:30 PM**

# Q&A and Public Comments

## Introduction

The primary goal of this public input meeting was to present long-term (year 2040) alternatives for the Route 9 corridor and receive feedback. This document includes questions asked during the public input meeting and responses to those questions, followed by a summary of specific comments received.

## Summary of Questions & Answers

This section of the document summarizes questions received regarding the Route 9 Corridor Study from the Q&A portion of the Virtual Public Input Meeting. This includes questions raised by attendees through advance written inquiries, as well as questions asked during the live event by speakers and through the chat box. Responses to each question are provided. During the public input meeting, answers were not readily available to some of the questions, and in those cases, the answers have been incorporated in this summary document.

| **Q1**. Focusing on individual intersection improvements just moves the problem around and pushes congestion down the road. Has this study looked at the impacts to other intersections as each individual intersection is improved? | |
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| A1: | This study analyzed a single point in time for the long-term, year 2040 scenario with all improvements in place concurrently. The study team acknowledges that individual intersection improvements made over time can have a different end result as traffic patterns change when individual improvements are implemented. As these individual intersection improvements are not yet approved or funded, future programming and planning would determine the priority order and scope of individual improvement projects. Should specific intersection improvements be approved and funding provided, each intersection improvement project would take into account the surrounding network during the planning and design process. Specific studies assessing the operations and safety on other roadways beyond Route 9 are subject to further direction from the Board of Supervisors. |

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| **Q2.** Have you considered metering traffic that is entering Route 9 during rush hour in a similar fashion to metering at on-ramps to major highways? Why not time the entrance of cars at major ingress points, and have metering lights along the way? | |
| A2: | The federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) specifies requirements for signals on public roadways. The purpose of the MUTCD is to provide uniformity of traffic control devices to promote highway safety and efficiency on the nation's roadways; improvements are bound by the requirements in the MUTCD. The MUTCD indicates that a metering application such as this is appropriate for freeway on-ramps specifically to meter traffic onto a freeway, whereas Route 9 is an arterial. Metering at external points along the corridor would also result in long queues and congestion in those locations which often exacerbate rear end crashes, which is a current safety problem along the corridor. Therefore, any such recommendation would have to overcome that operational/safety concern as well as gain special approval (if possible) for this application of signal metering. Despite the atypical application, there was one location where a metering signal was considered and analyzed for this project, however, the analysis revealed extensive queueing and negative impacts upstream of the signal, and therefore it was not recommended. |
| **Q3**. It has been said before that consideration of a Through Truck Restriction on Route 9 is not part of this study, what is the County doing regarding trucks on Route 9? | |
| A3: | The County is aware of the community's concerns regarding through trucks on Route 9. Given the community's strong interest expressed early and frequently as part of the outreach efforts from this corridor study, the County is setting up the basis for this process. Such a study will require direction from the Board of Supervisors and complex coordination with multiple agencies and adjacent jurisdictions. This fall County staff will work with agency stakeholders to lay the groundwork for what that process would look like. The Board of Supervisors is the entity who is required to ask VDOT to study the restriction feasibility.<br><br>The ultimate decision will lie with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Virginia policy indicates that any local governing body can request VDOT to restrict the use of through trucks on any part of a primary or secondary highway that is under the jurisdiction of VDOT if there is a reasonable alternate route that is provided. For example, the alternate route would need to have the same or better roadway conditions for the additional trucks. For more information on VDOT's Through Truck Restriction Program please see the following Frequently Asked Questions and Adopted Guidelines links below.<br><br>VDOT Through Truck Restriction Program – Frequently Asked Questions<br>VDOT Through Truck Restriction Program – Adopted Guidelines |

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| **Q4**. Given what this study forecasting revealed, there is increasing concern for the north-south side streets between Route 7 and Route 9, on the west end of the corridor. What is the County doing regarding these other routes that are estimated to have additional traffic on them in the future? | |
| A4: | Per direction from the Board of Supervisors, the Loudoun County Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure (DTCI) has performed a cursory review of safety hot spots and operations along Hillsboro Road (Route 690). With respect to other north-south routes such as Cider Mill Road and Woodgrove Road, no such work has been initiated yet, as it requires direction from the Board of Supervisors. DTCI is aware of, and is looking into this concern.. |
| **Q5.** When do you plan on presenting the Route 9 study to the Board of Supervisors? | |
| A5: | The Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study is anticipated to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in late spring 2022. |
| **Q6.** As the various near-term projects advance through construction (e.g., Route 9 and Route 287 roundabout and the Route 7 and Route 690 interchange), what is being done to prepare the adjacent roadways for changes to travel conditions? | |
| A6: | Each individual project takes into account the surrounding network during the planning and design process. Additionally, per direction from the Board of Supervisors, DTCI is reviewing safety hot spots and future operations along Hillsboro Road (Route 690)in order to assess corridor needs in advance of the interchange opening at Route 7 and Route 690. Specific studies assessing the operations and safety on other roadways beyond Route 9 and Roue 690 are subject to further direction from the Board of Supervisors. |
| **Q7.** What are the interrelated timelines for the various studies underway, including Route 9, Route 690, and other north-south routes between Route 7 and Route 9? | |
| A7: | The Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study is anticipated to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in late spring 2022; the findings from the Route 690 review will be presented concurrently. Further study of other north-south routes between Route 7 and Route 9 is pending Board of Supervisors direction, and if studied, would be presented at a later date following completion of the Route 9 and Route 690 studies. |
| **Q8.** What about safety and traffic calming measures and needs for the other side streets off of Route 9, such as Gaver Mill Road and Cider Mill Road and others? | |
| A8: | The Route 9 Corridor Safety & Operational Study is focusing on improvements to Route 9 and does not include detailed evaluation of improvements to other roadways. The types of improvements that are appropriate will depend on the specific challenges and roadway type. For example, traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, may not be appropriate on Route 9 but could help with cut through traffic on other minor roadways types. |

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| A8 cont. | To express concerns regarding other side street roadways that are in the vicinity of Route 9, contact the Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study team through email Route9@loudoun.gov or by phone 703-737-8299.<br><br>For information related to cut-through traffic and Loudoun County's Residential Traffic Management Program, additional details are available at: https://www.loudoun.gov/5324/Residential-Traffic-Management.<br><br>Please see also the response to Question #4. |
| **9.** For this study, was the standard Loudoun County Travel Demand Model used? If so, at least two studies by an eminent national modeling firm show that the model is flawed, does not meet federal standards, and exaggerates future travel. Has the consultant modified it to take into consideration its flaws, or likely future travel patterns (more telecommuting, etc.) that emerging national research shows? | |
| A9: | The future traffic projections were developed from the Loudoun County Travel Demand Model. This model incorporates the latest future land use and roadway network improvements, which were documented, approved, and adopted in the Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan. The model has been reviewed by VDOT and deemed in alignment with their modeling best practices and suitable for traffic forecasting applications.<br><br>The FHWA has helped produce a number of guidance documents regarding travel model best practices it recognizes that every region, and thus travel model, is by necessity unique. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is the general and permanent rules published by the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal government. Federal standards, set forth in 23 CFR Part 450 and 40 CFR Part 93, around travel modeling relate to the use of travel models to estimate vehicle emissions and the determination of conformity. In particular, these standards only apply to "serious, severe or extreme ozone or serious carbon monoxide non-attainment areas"; Loudoun County (and the Washington DC MPO of which it is a part), does not fall into this classification that are compiled regionally.<br><br>As the extent of long-term impacts of increases in telecommuting are still unknown, the forecasts looked at both an unconstrained and constrained scenario to understand the range of traffic growth that might occur along the Route 9 corridor. The detailed operational analysis, and subsequent recommendations, are based on the constrained forecast, which shows relatively modest change in traffic volumes along much of the corridor.<br><br>Lastly, if any of the improvements were approved, funded, and advanced to design, a more detailed traffic analysis and consideration of future travel patterns would be required at that time. |

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| **Q10.** These studies of Loudoun County's arterials parallel the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance's imperative, which obviously have driven these million-dollar rural arterial studies, to promote more sprawl development. This is deeply contrary to citizens' strongly expressed desire to halt sprawl. Please comment. | |
| A10: | The study team was asked to examine the needs of the Route 9 corridor with a renewed approach. The Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study is not working toward any predetermined outcome from earlier studies; rather, the current study is looking forward, and will be guided by the policy framework in the Adopted Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan. Any and all information that is collected through public survey and this Public Input Meeting will be reviewed by the study team to help develop a detailed understanding of the corridor, including more current public perspectives, travel experiences, and roadway priorities.<br><br>To provide further background into this need for a renewed look, the rural corridor safety and operational studies were requested by the Board of Supervisors during the 2017 Transportation Summit. Documents related to that direction are accessible through the links that follow.<br><br>2017 Transportation Summit:<br>June 29, 2017 Rural Primary Roads Presentation<br>June 29, 2017 Rural Primary Roads BOS Information Item #6<br><br>Subsequent Direction from Board of Supervisors Business Meeting July 3 ,2018<br>July 3, 2018 Rural Primary Roads BOS Action Item #4<br><br>The Countywide Transportation Plan also acknowledges this study is being conducted. Specifically, on the Countywide Transportation Plan roadway maps in Appendix 1, Note (VI) "Safety and operational studies will be conducted along primary roadways in the Rural Policy Area to assess current roadway conditions and identify potential solutions to improve traffic flow and safety. Improvements based on these studies will be implemented as directed by the Board of Supervisors." |
| **Q11.** Regarding shoulders, VDOT has an approved shoulder alternative that allows for part paved, part geogrid, grass shoulders. From experience, some VDOT planners would prefer that this remain secret. But such shoulders are documented to modify speeding behavior while still allowing enforcement activities and a breakdown area. Please provide us with this documented alternative. The FHWA also refers to this flexible standard for rural arterials. | |
| A11: | The County acknowledges that alternate, pervious shoulder treatments were implemented by VDOT Northern Virginia District at certain locations, but were done so at specific locations and their use was approved based on project-specific considerations. Unfortunately, the VDOT District had issues with these test sections regarding proper drainage, material availability, and an inability to keep the grass areas covered when traversed by vehicles. VDOT does not have a statewide policy for incorporating these alternate pervious shoulder treatments within VDOT |

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| A11 cont. | right of way, and therefore no such documentation exists allowing their use. Further questions regarding VDOT's acceptance of alternative shoulder material may be directed to their customer support call center or their online feedback form, available at: https://www.virginiadot.org/info/contactus.asp.<br><br>In conversations with Loudoun County Fire & Rescue during the partner agency meeting, shoulder material would be a factor in their site-specific decisions whether to traverse a shoulder, also depending on other factors such as weather and conditions beyond the shoulder. |
| **Q12.** Why is the shared use path on the south side between Harpers Ferry Road and West Virginia? It should be on the north side to avoid cutting into the sensitive mountain habitat and to preserve the rural character of Route 9. | |
| A12: | Pedestrian safety was the highest priority in considering the proposed location of the shared use path, specifically prioritizing consistency of path placement so as to limit the number of crossings required for an active transportation user traveling the corridor, considering both user safety and convenience to avoid unnecessary crossings of the high-speed roadway. Other factors were also considered such as proximity to regional shared use paths (Appalachian Trail and the W&OD Trail), presence of destinations and trip attractions along the corridor, and avoiding more constrained sections of the roadway due to historic or cultural resources,<br><br>The western area of the Route 9 corridor, specifically between the Appalachian Trail crossing and the Sweet Springs Country Store was one of the locations where pedestrians were frequently observed walking along the south side of Route 9. The pedestrians were observed walking to/from the trail and the store. Having the shared use path on the south side would provide a convenient point of access to the general store for through hikers, and a safer means by which to take the path they are already traveling. The Appalachian Trail is a popular trail and a major destination that was an important factor in the recommendation for the shared use path on the western end of the corridor. If the path were on the north side in this section of Route 9, it would require a second mid-block pedestrian crossings necessary to achieve the same path |
| **Q13.** Where should we direct information about concerns for other side street roadways off of Route 9? | |
| A13: | To express concerns regarding other side street roadways that are in the vicinity of Route 9, contact the Route 9 Corridor Safety and Operational Study team through email Route9@loudoun.gov or by phone 703-737-8299. |

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| **Q14**. The MWCOG model does NOT take into account local land use, environmental, or local zoning designations (rural preservation). This alone skews the County's Travel Demand Model. Please comment. | |
| A14: | The future traffic projections were developed from the Loudoun County Travel Demand Model. The Loudoun County model accounts for the local land use for the County, which includes environmental and zoning designations. The land use data is developed from current Census data for the base year while the future year is based on the Adopted Loudoun County 2019 Comprehensive Plan and previous growth trends to estimate the type and intensity of development that will occur throughout the County in the future. In addition, COG's website notes the updated population, household, and employment estimates are prepared through COG's Cooperative Forecasting Program every few years, reflecting the best judgments of local officials regarding the location of future housing, commercial and industrial development within the region. The forecasts are developed by the Cooperative Forecasting and Data Subcommittee (CFDS), reviewed by the Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC), and approved by the COG Board of Directors.<br><br>Loudoun County receives the revised inputs for the MWCOG model, as it becomes available, to update the inputs for the other jurisdictions in the County model. However, the County's model uses a finer zone structure than the MWCOG model to allow better representation of existing and future land use and demographics.<br><br>Links to the MWCOG entities referenced above are provided here.<br><br>Cooperative Forecasting Program<br>https://www.mwcog.org/community/planning-areas/cooperative-forecast/<br><br>Cooperative Forecasting and Data Subcommittee<br>https://www.mwcog.org/committees/cooperative-forecasting-and-data-subcommittee/<br><br>Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee<br>https://www.mwcog.org/committees/planning-directors-technical-advisory-committee/<br><br>Board of Directors<br>https://www.mwcog.org/committees/cog-board-of-directors/ |
| **Q15.** When is the expected start and completion of the Route 9 & Berlin Turnpike roundabout? | |
| A15: | Construction of the Route 9 & Berlin Turnpike Roundabout is expected to start fall 2023. Construction is scheduled to be complete fall 2025. For future updates on this project please visit the project webpage: https://www.loudoun.gov/5214/Route-9-287-Roundabout. |

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| **Q16.** Will the shared use path have soft surfaces for equestrians? | |
| A16: | The improvements from this study must be guided by the Adopted Loudoun County 2019 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP). For Route 9, the CTP calls for a 10-foot asphalt shared use path on one side of the roadway, and not soft surfaces for equestrians. It is important that a shared use path surface be provided that is accessible for persons with disabilities, and therefore must be firm, stable, and slip resistant. Any equestrian trail with soft surface would need to be a separate, parallel path. Regional Trails that may have natural surfaces are referred to in the CTP, but are not included for the Route 9 corridor.<br><br>The Loudoun County Linear Parks and Trails (LPAT) System plan was recently approved by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors. Additional details may be found on the project website linked below. The plan provides a roadmap for the County and its partners to build out an interconnected system that protects natural and cultural resources. The plan seeks to provide multi-use experiences for a variety of users along its corridors — hikers, walkers, nature enthusiasts, runners, equestrians, cyclists and canoe and kayak paddlers. These potential future off-road trails include a combination of trail types and surfaces. The LPAT plan includes multiple potential future corridors in northwestern Loudoun County.<br><br>https://www.loudoun.gov/5474/Project-Documents |
| **Q17**. Why not consider designating Route 9 as a Scenic Byway? | |
| A17: | Route 9 is currently designated a Virginia Byway, which is a road designated by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) as having relatively high aesthetic or cultural value, leading to or within areas of historical, natural or recreational significance.<br><br>According to VDOT's website, the National Scenic Byway process is managed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). To be designated as a National Scenic Byway, a road or highway must significantly meet at least one of the six intrinsic qualities. An intrinsic quality means the road has archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, or scenic features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area. There are several other requirements such as establishment of a Corridor Management Plan and an oversight entity for the corridor. Nominating a roadway to be a National Scenic Byway first requires FHWA to put out a call for nominations. The last such call was in 2020, and prior to that in 2012. An application would need to be submitted by a locality through VDOT. If the application is deemed viable then the nomination is made to FHWA.<br><br>Virginia has two National Scenic Byways: The Journey Through Hallowed Ground and Skyline Drive.<br><br>For more information regarding National Scenic Byways, please visit:<br>https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/designations/ |

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| **Q18.** Do you have to add shoulders when you install the shared use path, since you have to bring them up to VDOT standards? | |
| A18: | The answer to this question would depend on a variety of factors and conditions regarding how the shared use path was implemented. Generally speaking and most typically, if a shared use path was approved and funded, and ultimately designed for construction along Route 9, the paved shoulders – or at minimum an equivalent graded flat area beyond the edge of through travel way – would be included along with the shared use path. In addition to serving the other benefits offered by shoulders, in this case the shoulder would also provide additional buffer between the pedestrian travel way and vehicle travel way. |
| **Q19.** Susan Glass's comments on geogrid shoulders--please send documentation and studies regarding VDOT's testing of these shoulder materials. We will compare that with our own information obtained from VDOT. | |
| A19: | Please see the response to Q11 above regarding alternate shoulders, which includes a response provided directly by the VDOT Northern Virginia District office. There is no specific or formal documentation regarding the testing of these alternative shoulder treatments. |
| **Q20.** Has the use of speed cameras been considered to slow down traffic traveling east on Route 9 between Berlin Turnpike and Hamilton Station Road? Travelers from West Virginia seem to think it is a speedway. I was also wondering if parts of the Route 9 corridor could be expanded to allow the police to pull over speeders. | |
| A20: | The study team is familiar with the challenges described and the assessment of travel speeds in the area is supported by data. Vehicles are traveling over the posted speed limit in this vicinity, with the 85$^{th}$ percentile speed of 53 mph, or 8 mph over the posted speed limit at the location where data was collected.<br><br>Speed cameras are not enforceable in Virginia unless they are for active school zones or work zones. This is described in the Virginia Code § 46.2-882.1, for which further details can be found here: https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title46.2/chapter8/section46.2-882.1/. For these reasons, speed cameras would not be enforceable for the purpose described on Route 9.<br><br>The corridor study identified enforcement areas at multiple spots along Route 9 for officers to sit and have better opportunity for enforcement, in an effort to reduce travel speeds. Candidate locations for these enforcement areas were developed in collaboration with Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO). After candidate locations were identified based on site conditions, LCSO provided additional insight regarding corridor issues, safety concerns, and recommended observation times at certain locations for evaluating driver behavior. LCSO representatives stated that speeding enforcement is a challenge on this corridor due to lack of available area on the roadside for a police vehicle to park. These enforcement areas would be short segments of wide |

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| | shoulder for law enforcement to monitor traffic and driver behavior. As part of the corridor study mid-term recommendations, four enforcement areas have been recommended. |
| **Q21.** Trucks traveling Route 9 between Berlin Turnpike and Hamilton Station Road pick up speed on the straight stretch, causing loud tire/road noise. Is there a new road surface technology to reduce tire noise? | |
| A21: | Approximately ten years ago, VDOT initiated research into the viability of quiet pavement technology, specifically with the intent to reduce "tire-pavement noise" as suggested by the inquiry. For traditional asphalt pavement roadways, the findings from this research were that the materials were initially quieter but then the benefits diminished over time to the point where the difference in noise compared to traditional asphalt pavements was not detectable. Additionally, the quiet asphalt materials require close monitoring and aggressive application of deicing chemicals to avoid safety hazards during winter weather events. For these reason, the quieter pavement surface type is no longer used by VDOT. |
| **Q22.** Trucks traveling east on Route 9 approaching the Hamilton Station Road signal use their jake brakes on the downhill approximately a half-mile prior to the signal to stop suddenly due to vehicles slowing and stopping for the signal. Can flashing lights be installed in advance of the signal in both directions? | |
| A22: | Advance warning flashing beacons include a warning sign with circular yellow signal faces alternating flashing above the sign. These devices are appropriate when an engineering safety study deems their installation appropriate. In this case the beacons would be installed along with a "Signal Ahead" sign or a "Watch for Stopped Vehicles" sign. A Signal Ahead sign currently exists in this eastbound direction approaching Hamilton Station Road. In accordance with VDOT policy, these beacons "should be used sparingly." While the beacons can be effective at enhancing sign conspicuity, their effectiveness is diminished when used in excess or used indiscriminately. There are already multiple flashing beacons at locations along Route 9. And based on a review of the safety hot spots and the associated crash data, the study team did not find that crash data and other conditions justified flashing beacon installation approaching Hamilton Station Road. |
| **Q23.** There is a speeding problem between Berlin Turnpike and Hamilton Station Road. Can there be an increase in speeding fines as part of enforcement in this area? | |
| A23: | Fines for speeding in Virginia are established by the Supreme Court of Virginia, Traffic Infractions and Uniform Fine Schedule, as well as the Virginia Code. The fine schedule does include higher fines for higher speed increments above posted speed limit, as well as special sections of roadway such as school zones and work zones. |

## Comments from the Public

The following section includes comments received in advance of the public input meeting, during the meeting both verbally and in the chat box, and immediately following the meeting. The comments are listed in no particular order.

1) Concerned that as individual spot intersection improvements are made individually, it will just push the congestion down the road to the next location until that location is improved.
2) Worried that the acceptance of a shared use path opens up the road footprint for future construction and potential widening to four lanes.
3) While the single-lane roundabouts have proven successful, not sure about the hybrid, 2x1 roundabouts, and they will cause impacts, particularly east and west of Hillsboro.
4) Need to address the safety problems on minor roadways that are not ready for higher traffic volumes; Cider Mill Road is one example.
5) Through Truck Restriction on Route 9 is still something the Focus Group has wanted and believes should be addressed.
6) Support the specific safety improvements that are consistent in both alternatives, such as the turn lanes at unsignalized intersections.
7) Alternative B with the wider roundabouts is too radical, particularly in the area of Hillsboro.
8) Drivers should be encouraged to use a safer route of Route 340 and Route 7, instead of Route 9.
9) Standard shoulders at 8-ft would pose a greater safety risk than we have now.
10) The study team came into this with an open mind and applied the travel demand model and forecasting process correctly, based on the detailed information they provided the Focus Group.
11) Need to keep traffic on the major roads and off of the side streets like Cider Mill Road and Woodgrove Road.
12) We are seeing an increase in big truck traffic and this is a problem that needs to be investigated through a Truck Restriction process.
13) Participated in the Focus Group and thought it was a good process.
14) Concerned that the future forecasted traffic is too low and that more development in West Virginia will result in higher volumes in the future.
15) Appreciate consideration of further study for the north-south routes between Route 7 and Route 9. A document summarizing residents' concerns is being prepared and will be submitted to DTCI.
16) Disappointed that the Gaver Mill Road cut through problem was not addressed through this study.
17) Concerned that Alternative B with the new alignment of northbound Hillsboro Road would land-lock a small area with the cemetery.
18) Gaver Mill Road cut through continues to be a problem. There is no consideration for additional improvements on the side streets from Route 9, such as speed humps and other measures to prevent additional traffic on the side streets.
19) These necessary improvements on Route 9 are being caused by West Virginia, because they widened West Virginia Route 9 to four lanes and now we are paying for their increased traffic.

20) There are advantages to keeping more traffic on Route 9 and less on the north-south routes. Increased traffic using Woodgrove Road would result in higher volumes running along Evening Star Drive in front of the elementary school as well as very narrow passage areas in Round Hill. Plus new subdivisions around Round Hill are already seeing cut through traffic.
21) Cider Mill Road has no room for error on narrow stretches of the roadway. Vehicles get beyond the blind curves and then accelerate to very high speeds given the roadway conditions. Many equestrians live on Cider Mill Road and are pulling large trailers through the corridor, making the increased traffic and unsafe driver behavior even more concerning. There should be speed humps on Cider Mill Road in the straight sections and chicanes near the blind curves. The speed limit should be lowered and there should be passive measures to keep traffic on Route 7 and Route 9 instead of these side streets.
22) Mapping applications show Route 9 as the shorter route compared to Route 340/Route 7, so anytime improvements are made to Route 9, that makes it a more attractive route by improving traffic flow.
23) Concerned about walking paths adjacent to multi-lane roundabouts.
24) Should drop the speed limit on Route 9 down to 35 mph and make Route 7 the more desirable route now.
25) Concerned with more construction on Route 9 taking away from the rural character and scenic beauty of the corridor.
26) As a homeowner and landowner along Route 9 between Harpers Ferry Road and the West Virginia border, a shared use path would massively damage the beauty of this scenic corridor through the ridge. I am strongly against the idea of widening Route 9.
27) The roundabouts at the Route 7 and Route 9 interchange are problematic and with every new improvement along Route 7 east and west of Leesburg, we are just moving the congestion choke point.
28) It's already challenging to get onto Route 9, and now we are going to have a larger steadier flow from the proposed roundabout at Berlin Turnpike, it seems that it will make it even more challenging and will be a bigger safety issue to get onto Route 9, and it will result in vehicles going even faster beyond the roundabout and moving the congestion to the next choke point. Engineers focused on just one intersection are missing the big picture problem.
29) As a resident in Hillsboro and business owner along Route 9, Hillsboro has taken great strides to make the community a walkable and safe place to raise a family and contribute to the economic growth in western Loudoun County in a way that cherishes our agricultural past. It is vital that VDOT and local government work together to make sure the traffic calming measures that were put into place remain successful, and that Route 9 connects the community it serves. Controlling through, non-local truck traffic is a must. Part of cherishing our agricultural is ensuring the roads we use promote the type of environment we want to have in a agro-tourism based western Loudoun. Smaller country roads with local truck traffic ensure development remains right sized, smart, and minimally environmentally impactful. Please consider your action in maintain a safe and rural western Loudoun. Say no to road expansion and say no to non-local through truck traffic.
30) Having lived on Route 9 since 2013, and on Hidden Meadow from 2010-2013, three concerns are:

a. Heavy dump truck traffic headed east between 3:30-6:00 AM, which picks up speed on the straight stretch between Berlin Turnpike and Hamilton Station Road. This causes loud tire and road noise. The trucks also hit their jake brakes on the curve going downhill a half-mile mile upstream of the traffic signal at Hamilton Station Road due to the slowing and stopped traffic waiting at that signal. VDOT changed the variable speed limit (40 mph near the signals, 50 mph between the lights) to 45 mph the entire stretch. This initially mitigated some of the road noise, but the inhibitory effect wore off & truck drivers are still speeding eastbound on the straight stretch between Berlin Turnpike and Hamilton Station Road.
b. Loud motorcycle traffic on weekends, we need barrier type noise mitigation such as sound walls.
c. Enforcement, there should be some type of increase in speeding fines.

Please see also responses to Questions 21-23 that were submitted as part of this comment.

31) The two-lane roundabouts at Route 9 and Route 7 are racetracks, as cars try to pass in the narrow roundabouts.
32) It's time to take a more regional approach to fixing Route 9. If Route 340 was made with three lanes from Charles Town to Berryville, then Route 7 extended to three lanes from Berryville until it meets in Leesburg on the east side with a clover leaf at Route 340 and Route 7, more commuters and travelers would take that route including trucks. It needs to be easier for commuters to get to work and off the scenic back roads. Understanding this is a huge task, believe it can still be done.
33) From the operational standpoint, Alt B is objectively better at achieving results assuming the estimates for congestion are reliable. However, the study does not seem to attempt to put any sort of quantitative or qualitative metric on "how much" improvement to safety will be realized, unless I am overlooking it. That makes it hard to "vote" for one or the other, or neither option - with respect to both operational and safety considerations.
34) As Loudoun County considers changes to Route 9, strongly request those in guidance and decision-making positions to consider two things:
    a. This is a rural community with many historical buildings. Instead of widening Route 9 and encouraging more traffic down this small byway, instead make improvements to other routes (e.g., Routes 7 and 340) that are better suited to carry it.
    b. If any improvements/alterations are to be made to Route 9, what considerations are being made for streets adjacent to it – during and after? When changes are made to Route 9, as can be attested with Hillsboro and Gaver Mill Road, traffic patterns are altered on side roads. The burden and risk increases. Safety needs to be prioritized. Experiencing motorists looking to avoid the traffic circles in Hillsboro, driving at increased high speeds, and repeatedly petitioned the town for speed pillows, not the temporary screw-down type, to deter speeding, and have been denied. What is planned to increase safety of these side roadways?

Please see also response to Questions #4, 8, and 13 where the questions asked in this comment are addressed.